

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**National Agricultural Statistics Service****Notice of Intent to Merge Two Currently Approved Information Collections With a Proposed Information Collection**

AGENCY: National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the National Agricultural Statistics Service's (NASS) intention to combine two currently approved information collections, the June Agricultural Survey (0535-0089) and the Agricultural Surveys Program (0535-0213) with a new information collection, the Fall Agricultural Survey. The new integrated information collection will be called the Agricultural Surveys Program.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by July 2, 1997 to be assured for consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Rich Allen, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4117 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-2000, (202) 720-4333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Agricultural Surveys Program.
OMB Number: 0535-0213.

Expiration Date of Approval: February 28, 1999.

Type of Request: To create a single information collection by merging two currently approved information collections and a proposed information collection.

Abstract: The National Agricultural Statistics Service is responsible for collecting and issuing state and national estimates of crop and livestock production, grain stocks, farm numbers, land values, on-farm pesticide usage, and pest crop management practices. The June Agricultural Survey collects information on planted acreage for major crops, livestock inventories, agricultural land values, and on-farm grain stocks. The survey establishes a base for estimating crop production and value for the remainder of the crop year. Information from this survey is used by farmers, ranchers, private sector

agribusinesses, government agencies in planning, farm policy analysis, and program administration.

The Agricultural Surveys Program contains a series of surveys that obtains basic agricultural data from farmers and ranchers throughout the Nation for preparing agricultural estimates and forecasts of crop acreages, yield, and production; stocks of grains and soybeans; hog and pig numbers; sheep inventory and lamb crop; cattle inventory; and cattle on feed. Uses of the statistical information are extensive and varied. Producers, farm organizations, agribusinesses, state and national farm policy makers, and government agencies are important users of these statistics. Agricultural statistics are used to plan and administer other related Federal and state programs in such areas as consumer protection, conservation, foreign trade, education and recreation.

The Fall Agricultural Survey collects information on fall planted crops, livestock inventories, grazing fees, land values, pesticide usage, and pest management practices. Producers, farm organizations, agribusinesses, state and national policy makers, and government agencies are users of the data. The Environmental Protection Agency uses the pesticide use information to conduct benefit and risk assessments for use during the product registration cycle. USDA uses the pesticide and pest management information to build its chemical use database, to conduct pesticide benefit assessments, and to assessments, and to assess the adoption of integrated pest management practices.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 13 minutes per response.

Respondents: Farms.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 565,000.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 122,000 hours.

Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from Larry Gambrell, the Agency OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 720-5778.

Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c)

ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, such as through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Larry Gambrell, Agency OMB Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 4162 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-2000.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Signed at Washington, D.C., April 14, 1997.

Donald M. Bay,

Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

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BILLING CODE 3410-20-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Rural Utilities Service****Cooperative Power Association; Finding of No Significant Impact**

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of finding of no significant impact.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and RUS Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1794), has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a project proposed by three electric utilities: Cooperative Power Association (CPA) of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, Otter Tail Power Company of Fergus Falls, Minnesota, and Missouri Basin Municipal Power Agency of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. These three utilities are collectively referred to as the Partners for the purpose of this project. They proposed to construct and operate a transmission line and associated facilities between Alexandria and Henning in Otter Tail and Douglas Counties, Minnesota. The line will originate at the Rush Lake Tap Switching Station, located about 2.6 miles northeast of Henning, Minnesota. The line will terminate at a new switching station to be located where the new line intersects the existing